

WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS FOR SOUTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN COUNTIES

November 2001



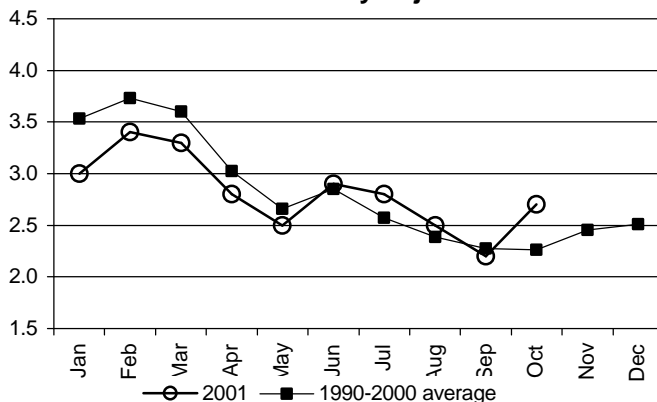
Note: This publication, *Workforce Observations*, replaces the *Labor Market Review*, which was previously known as the *Employment Review*.

An ambiguous increase in unemployment

Between September and October, unemployment rates (not seasonally adjusted), climbed for the nation, (4.7 percent to 5.0 percent), the state of Wisconsin (3.4 percent to 3.9 percent), the South Central region (2.2 percent to 2.7 percent) and Dane County (1.6 percent to 1.8 percent). South Central Wisconsin's population center, Dane County, once again reported the lowest unemployment rate in the state. No region had a lower unemployment rate than South Central Wisconsin's 2.7 percent, which was half a percentage point below the next lowest region, North Central Wisconsin. Dane and Sauk Counties were two of 13 Wisconsin counties reporting less than 3 percent unemployment. Jefferson and Marquette were two of 11 Wisconsin counties with unemployment over 5 percent.

Rising unemployment adds to challenges faced by job seekers and workers, particularly those in occupations lacking job security or readily transferable skills. Abundant (albeit anecdotal) news reports suggest that hospitality and travel employers are hiring fewer people. Nonetheless, the broad outlook is not so dismal just yet. Comparing South Central Wisconsin's unemployment rates this year to the average of its unemployment rates from 1990 to 2000, most of this year seems to be fairly close to the average. (See graph at right.) The data from 1990 to the present show that this October's increase is more typical of November or February. This October's small spike may reflect a rise in uncertainties arising out of the September 11 attacks, attempts to spread anthrax and the military campaign in Afghanistan. Since the data was collected in early October, these uncertainties have eased somewhat.

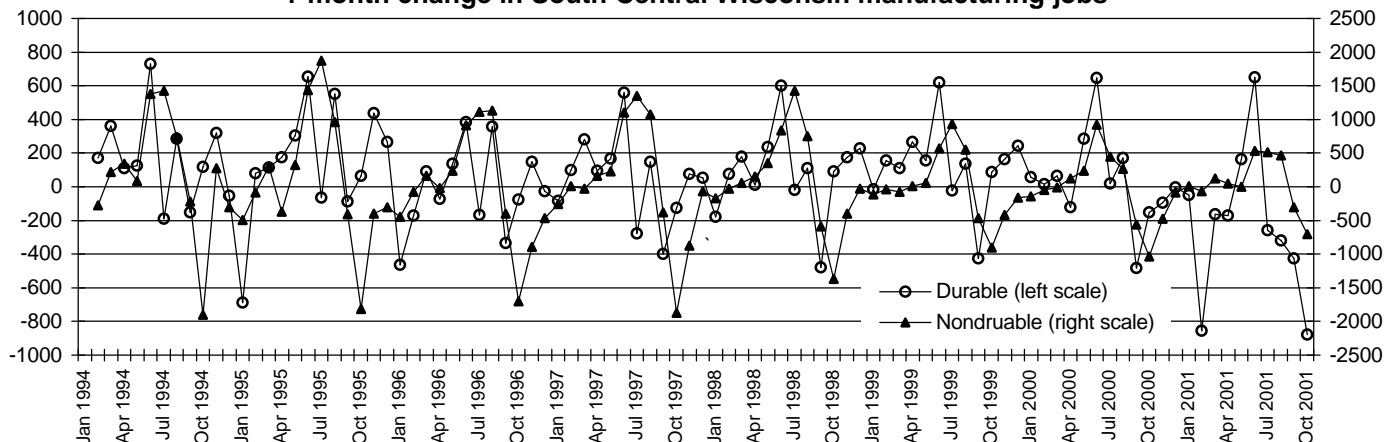
South Central WI unemployment rates
not seasonally adjusted



Every county in South Central Wisconsin reported more employed residents in October 2001 than in October 2000. Over the year, the number of employed persons increased by roughly 14,000 and the number of payroll jobs rose 9,900. This discrepancy might suggest an increase in self employment or other non-payroll work.

Dodge was the only county to have fewer jobs this October than last October. This reduction is largely due to layoffs at a major supplier of agricultural and lawn-care equipment. Due to slow sales, the company planned to shut down most of its production for five weeks beginning in late September. This accounts for much of the softening in durable goods manufacturing in South Central Wisconsin, particularly in Dodge County. The graph below shows that recent months have been challenging for durable goods manufacturing.

1-month change in South Central Wisconsin manufacturing jobs



Much of the slowdown in nondurable manufacturing can be characterized as simply not picking up pace this summer as much as it does most summers. It did not slow down in October as much as it usually does. Durable goods manufacturing, on the other hand, had a record gain in employment in July and has been shedding jobs ever since.

Between September and October, Dane County gained about 1,400 government jobs and Sauk County lost roughly 1,200 service jobs. These changes may be dramatic, but they are

fairly consistent with seasonal trends seen in recent years. Sauk County's vibrant tourism trade begins to wind down in September as students return to classes. Similarly, when students return, Dane County's public high schools and the University of Wisconsin-Madison require much more maintenance, food service and clerical work than they did during the summer. Although most of these workers are on the job by September, the early October survey usually shows workers who were not shown by the early September survey.

October 2001 Estimates	Wisconsin	South Central WDA	Madison MSA	Columbia County	Dodge County	Jefferson County	Marquette County	Sauk County
October 2001								
Civilian Labor Force*	3,050,800	445,100	278,400	27,600	50,400	44,500	7,200	36,900
Employed	2,932,500	433,100	273,300	26,600	47,400	43,000	6,800	35,900
Unemployed	118,300	12,000	5,100	1,060	3,000	1,470	400	1,010
Unemployment Rate (%)	3.9	2.7	1.8	3.8	5.9	3.3	5.5	2.7
Total jobs, all industries**	2,862,900	438,000	300,300	21,200	36,400	38,700	4,000	37,500
Construction & Mining	136,500	22,400	14,900	1,140	2,300	1,340	390	2,300
Manufacturing	585,800	68,900	29,000	5,400	13,400	12,800	1,240	7,100
Transport & Public Util.	137,200	15,400	10,300	760	1,360	1,780	130	1,090
Wholesale Trade	137,300	18,300	13,100	810	1,060	1,510	90	1,770
Retail Trade	504,400	77,100	50,800	4,500	5,200	7,200	800	8,500
Finance, Ins. Real Estate	152,800	26,600	23,300	390	840	810	120	1,110
Services	788,500	112,500	81,000	4,400	7,300	9,100	590	10,100
Government	420,400	96,900	77,900	3,700	4,900	4,200	610	5,500
Change From September 2001								
Civilian Labor Force*	12,600	-1,000	920	-630	250	10	-110	-1,440
Employed	-2,500	-3,200	270	-750	-740	-180	-190	-1,640
Unemployed	15,100	2,200	640	120	990	190	80	200
Unemployment Rate (%)	0.5	0.5	0.2	0.5	1.9	0.4	1.1	0.6
Total jobs, all industries**	7,600	-1,920	760	-620	-410	-40	0	-1,610
Construction & Mining	-1,240	-30	70	10	-20	-10	20	-100
Manufacturing	-5,300	-1,580	-720	-160	-280	-200	0	-210
Transport & Public Util.	470	270	110	-30	70	70	0	50
Wholesale Trade	-210	-140	-110	0	-40	0	0	0
Retail Trade	2,200	-100	260	-230	-20	100	10	-230
Finance, Ins. Real Estate	340	130	120	0	0	10	10	0
Services	-2,800	-2,300	-400	-290	-170	-120	-30	-1,240
Government	14,100	1,790	1,420	90	40	110	10	120
Change From October 2000								
Civilian Labor Force*	79,100	18,600	12,000	1,050	2,300	1,210	320	1,610
Employed	42,400	14,000	10,600	830	360	640	220	1,320
Unemployed	36,600	4,600	1,440	220	1,980	580	100	280
Unemployment Rate (%)	1.2	-12.5	0.4	0.7	3.8	1.2	1.1	0.6
Total jobs, all industries**	-3,700	9,900	8,500	510	-220	110	-10	970
Construction & Mining	-2,000	100	120	40	-20	20	10	-60
Manufacturing	-29,800	-2,300	-1,650	20	-450	-220	20	-70
Transport & Public Util.	-50	130	110	-30	40	-20	20	10
Wholesale Trade	-2,800	210	160	10	-10	20	0	30
Retail Trade	1,690	2,100	1,160	190	150	40	30	540
Finance, Ins. Real Estate	3,400	1,220	1,220	-40	0	20	0	20
Services	13,700	3,700	3,000	170	120	70	-20	380
Government	12,200	4,800	4,400	140	-50	200	-70	110

* Includes participants residing in area. **Includes employment with employers located in area. Estimates NOT seasonally adjusted. Current month estimates are preliminary. Numbers over 2,000 rounded to nearest 100, under 2,000 rounded to nearest 10. Sub-units may not add to totals due to rounding. Calculations based on unrounded numbers.

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